

friend. My wife, Evelyn, and I are thinking about his family during these difficult times.

May you be in glory, my brother.

SUPPORTING UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GARCÍA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARCÍA of California. Madam Speaker, mankind has existed on this beautiful blue marble that we call Earth for nearly 200,000 years. Yet, just 118 years ago, we learned to fly in our own planet's atmosphere.

As a nation, we are thirsty for something to rally behind, something that unifies us, something that we can all be invested in, be intrigued by, be impassioned about, and something to be positive about.

There isn't a better movement to get behind than our Nation's modern space program. Some question the value of spending precious taxpayer dollars to overcome our planet's gravity to go to space, but those people aren't seeing the big picture.

In the early 1900s, many questioned the value of spending so much capital and risking so many lives in hopes of conquering flight, and now we can't imagine a world in which we don't have the luxury of modern aviation.

We had no idea that a little canvas glider flown on a beach in North Carolina would evolve into the modern fighter jet.

We have no choice but to think outside the box, think outside of our own solar system even, to make sure that we not only understand the answers to our most profound questions but also discover new questions for tomorrow that we can't even fathom asking today.

We have no choice but to better understand the extensions of God's creations, to know if we are alone in the universe, to know if there is a second home somewhere out there beyond our sights and imaginations.

Failing to press on is a disservice to previous generations who have sacrificed so much and worked so hard to get us here today. Failing to press on is a disservice to current and future generations who benefit from our progress today.

You see, space is a domain where we, as a nation, can thrive, but it is also a domain where we can be vulnerable and susceptible to the malicious intent of foes such as China, Russia, and Iran. There are existential threats right now in space.

Any decision on our part to divest from this adventure will not dissuade our foes from advancing their own space programs. It would only serve to highlight a massive strategic vulnerability and potentially create capability gaps that will be impossible to fill in the future.

A path of divestment is an unforgiving one and the damages irrep-

arable. While we as a nation currently hold an advantage in space, our lead, like the nearly 118 years that separates today from the Wright brothers' first flight in 1903, can vanish in the blink of an eye.

In this new frontier, time is as precious as money. Now is not the time to slow down.

As big as space is, we must, as a nation, be bigger, be bigger as a united team. As a nation, we must recognize that this investment in our future is more than science and curiosity; it is more than resolve and perseverance; and it is more than just discovery and challenges. It is about survival, excellence, and inspiration; it is about national security; and it is about planetary security against threats that are not slowing down. It is about a new golden era for the American space program.

As a result of the construction of the International Space Station, we have not had all humans together on this planet for over 20 years. That is remarkable to think about.

In 2020, SpaceX, a critical commercial partner in our quest for low-cost and frequent space travel, averaged one rocket launch every 2 weeks. That is 26 launches in a year or almost three times the number of flights that the space shuttle did in its best year.

Earlier this year, NASA successfully landed a JPL Mars rover on the Martian surface for the fifth time. We were the first and only nation to have done this until recently when the UAE and China just landed on Mars.

In April, we flew a helicopter in the Martian atmosphere. No other nation has done that, but the United States now has.

In 2024, we plan to once again land Americans on the Moon and further make history with the first woman on the Moon. Still, to this day, no other nation has done that.

During our lifetimes, we will land Americans on Mars. No other nation has done that. The U.S. will be the first.

As Americans, we are, in fact, exceptional. Our successes in space are testimonies to this. We should take pride in those successes, take pride in our exceptionalism, especially in the space domain.

In 1962, JFK had to inspire us with his moonshot speech. Today, we have no excuses not to be inspired. We in Congress have no excuses to not support these exceptional programs in earnest and with pride. We have no choice.

URGING SENATE TO PASS FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the Senate to pass the For the People Act, or H.R. 1.

This urgently needed legislation would fight corruption and the over-

whelming influence of money in politics by strengthening ethics rules and reforming our campaign finance system.

It would protect the foundation of our democracy, the right to vote, at a time when it is under attack in many States.

I am proud that my home State of Illinois is not one of them. In fact, our legislature recently voted to expand ballot access. But for those who aren't lucky enough to live in Illinois, H.R. 1 is a much-needed defense against widespread voter suppression.

As the Senate considers these long-overdue reforms, I rise today, here in the House of Representatives, to insist that representation matters.

That is Congress' role in our representative democracy: to represent the American people. If the Members elected to this Chamber don't represent the diversity of the American people's backgrounds and their experiences, we can't do a good job of representing their perspectives and advocating for their needs.

Consider that women make up just over a quarter of the 117th Congress, and that is the highest percentage it has ever been. We see the effects of this lack of diversity in the way our government works for women, or, rather, the fact that it doesn't work for women.

Women have been hit harder than men by job loss during the pandemic. This is partly because women still do more childcare than men, and the pandemic triggered a childcare crisis. But this doesn't come out of nowhere. It is a result of chronic failure to address areas that disproportionately impact women.

Because women haven't had a seat at the table, our needs have been sidelined. As a result, everybody loses, not just women. All Americans are part of an economy that depends on childcare to function.

It is no coincidence that the Biden-Harris administration's bold plan to invest in human infrastructure comes just months after our first female Vice President was sworn in. This is just one of many instances in which everybody benefits when different perspectives and life experiences are represented in our elected leadership.

When we talk about candidate diversity, we are talking about growing our economy, improving childcare, and strengthening our infrastructure. Good policy starts with good representation.

H.R. 1 will give Americans the government we deserve by enabling us to elect people who truly represent us.

One of the most important provisions in the bill for improving representation is the creation of a small-donor public financing program.

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In the States and cities where it is already in use, public financing is popular because it empowers candidates to get their message out to voters, even if